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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

### **MEMORANDUM**

# The Situation in Vietnam

State Dept. review completed

NSA review completed

**Top Secret** 

14 December 1966



Information as of 1600 14 December 1966

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#### HIGHLIGHTS

DRV interceptors succeeded for the first time in destroying a US aircraft with an air-to-air missile as an F-105 was downed 42 miles southwest of Hanoi on 14 December.

- I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
  The Viet Cong attacked a fuel storage area and a
  South Vietnamese Army position in two separate raids
  early on 14 December in coastal Quang Tin Province
  (Paras. 1-2). A US forward air controller sighted 150
  Communists moving south through the western portion
  of the DMZ and a subsequent air strike killed 120 of
  the infiltrators (Para. 3).
- II. Political Developments in South Vietnam: The Constituent Assembly continues to debate whether to include a prime minister as well as a president in the future government (Para. 1). The formation of the Democratic Alliance Bloc was officially announced in the assembly on 13 December (Para. 2). The issue of the assembly's founding law and assembly-GVN relations may again come up for discussion in the assembly (Para. 3).

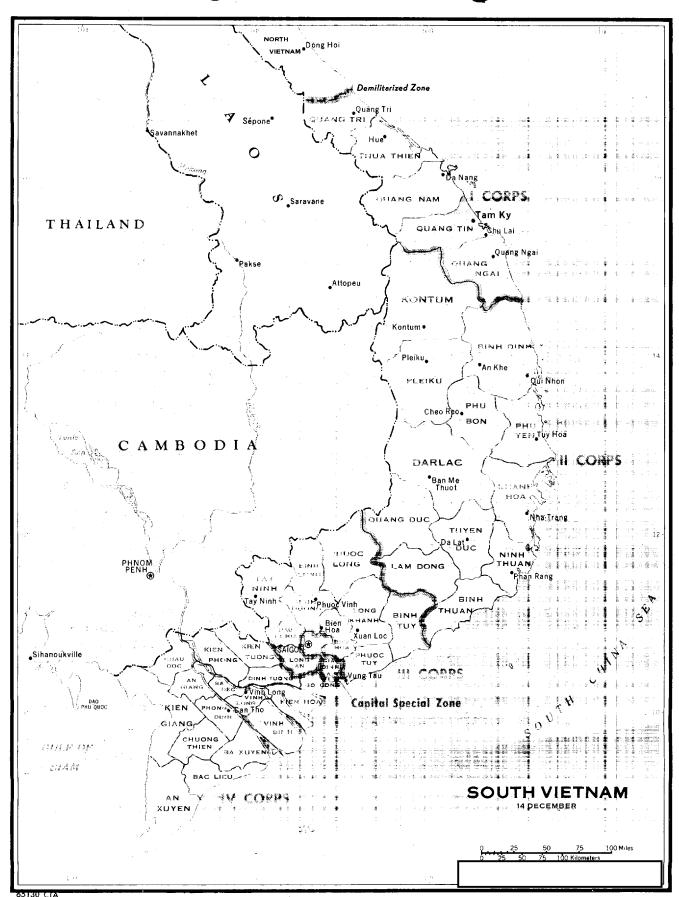
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III. Military Developments in North Vietnam: For the second consecutive day, North Vietnamese surface-to-air missile units on 14 December brought down two US planes. DRV interceptors scored their first hit with an air-to-air missile (Paras. 1-2).

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- IV. Other Communist Military Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.
- V. Communist Political Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.

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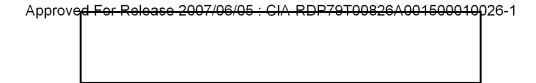
#### I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

- 1. Viet Cong troops attacked a fuel storage area in Tam Ky, the capital of coastal Quang Tin Province, in a predawn raid on 14 December. Ten mortar rounds landed in the storage area; approximately 40,000 gallons of fuel were destroyed. One South Vietnamese was killed and one wounded during the attack.
- 2. A South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) unit located about three miles east of Tay Ninh city was attacked by an enemy force of unknown size early on 14 December. The ARVN force was supported by allied artillery fire directed against the attackers. During an hour-long clash, 34 ARVN soldiers were killed and 39 others wounded. A total of 25 enemy soldiers were reported killed.
- 3. On 12 December a US forward air controller-an observer in a light aircraft such as the L-19-reported a group of approximatley 150 North Vietnamese
  Army (NVA) soldiers in the extreme northwestern
  corner of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). An air strike
  directed at this force resulted in the killing of 120
  Communist soldiers. The presence of this force in
  the western DMZ,

  indicates
  that NVA units are continuing to use this route for infiltration into South Vietnam.

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#### II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

- 1. The Constituent Assembly continued to debate on 13 December whether to include a prime minister as well as a president in the future government. No vote was taken, and the debate was scheduled to resume on 14 December. A large number of deputies apparently wish to express themselves on this issue.
- 2. The formation of the Democratic Alliance Bloc was formally announced in the assembly on 13 December. As suggested by previous reporting, the new bloc is an amalgamation of the heavily northern Catholic, 16-member Democratic Bloc and the 25-member Hoa Hao Cao Dai VNQDD Alliance Bloc. With four other members picked up elsewhere in the assembly, it is now the largest bloc in the assembly, although it does not constitute a majority. The US Embassy has reported that the components of the bloc have been considered progovernment, and specifically in favor of Premier Ky.

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The government has not yet officially informed

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Constituent Assembly delegates have been aware for more than a week that the government has decided not to amend the founding law, they have appeared content to continue work on the constitution.

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## CENTRAL NORTH VIETNAM 106 CHINA Lang Son Thai Nguyen Kep Phu Lang Thuong Yen Vien Railroad Yard Hai Duong $GULF\ OF\ TONKIN$ Phu Ly LAOS Targets Planes downed MIG encounters NAUTICAL MILES

#### III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

- l. For the second consecutive day, North Vietnamese surface-to-air missile (SAM) units on 14
  December brought down two US planes as another coordinated attack involving USAF F-105s and navy aircraft from three carriers was mounted against the
  Yen Vien railroad yard and the Van Dien vehicle
  depot. DRV interceptors also succeeded for the
  first time in destroying a US aircraft with an airto-air missile as a USAF F-105 was downed 42 miles
  southwest of Hanoi. US pilots reported that they
  damaged their targets heavily, and that a number
  of SAM sites may have been destroyed.
- 2. Both US aircraft lost to SAMs on 14 December were hit over an area about 55 miles south of Hanoi. An A4E from the carrier USS Ticonderoga received a direct hit after the Van Dien strike; there was no chance of pilot survival. Moments later an F8E inbound from the USS Roosevelt was damaged by a near miss from a SAM, gradually lost power, and crashed before the pilot could bail out. The F-105 was apparently brought down by a missile from one of two MIG-21Ds which attacked a flight of four F-105s as they were heading west from the Yen Vien attack. The pilot ejected and was recovered in good condition.

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## **Top Secret**

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MEMORANDUM TALKING PAPER

MEMO TITLE: The Impact of Operation ATTLEBORO

- 1. This memo was requested by Bromley Smith. He desired a final assessment of ATTLEBORO, in view of OCI's preliminary appraisal of the operation published on 18 November while it was still underway.
- 2. The present memo reviews the over-all course of the battle, pointing out why it was terminated and the fact that the bulk of US forces did not fully penetrate Wall Zone C, but confined their activities for cogent tactical reasons to the southern edge of the zone. As a result, while substantial casualties were inflicted on the Communists and their planned offensive operations were apparently at least temporarily disrupted, their capabilities in the area were probably not permanently impaired.
- 3. The memo concludes, however, that the growing vulnerability of the important Communist redoubts to allied ground power was demonstrated to the enemy. The memo also notes the recent emphasis in Communist propaganda on guerrilla warfare tactics, and suggests that the apparent decision by the Communists to back away from large-scale offensive actions in favor of guerrilla tactics may have been motivated by the success of such recent large allied appoiling operations as ATTLEBORO.
- 4. It is recommended that this memorandum be given the same distribution as the earlier one on ATTLEBORO, elite internal and external dissemination.

